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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

VOL. 9 NO. 2
FEBRUARY 1979
ISSUE NO. 184

* THE FINAL DOT CUTBACK PLAN FOR AMTRAK

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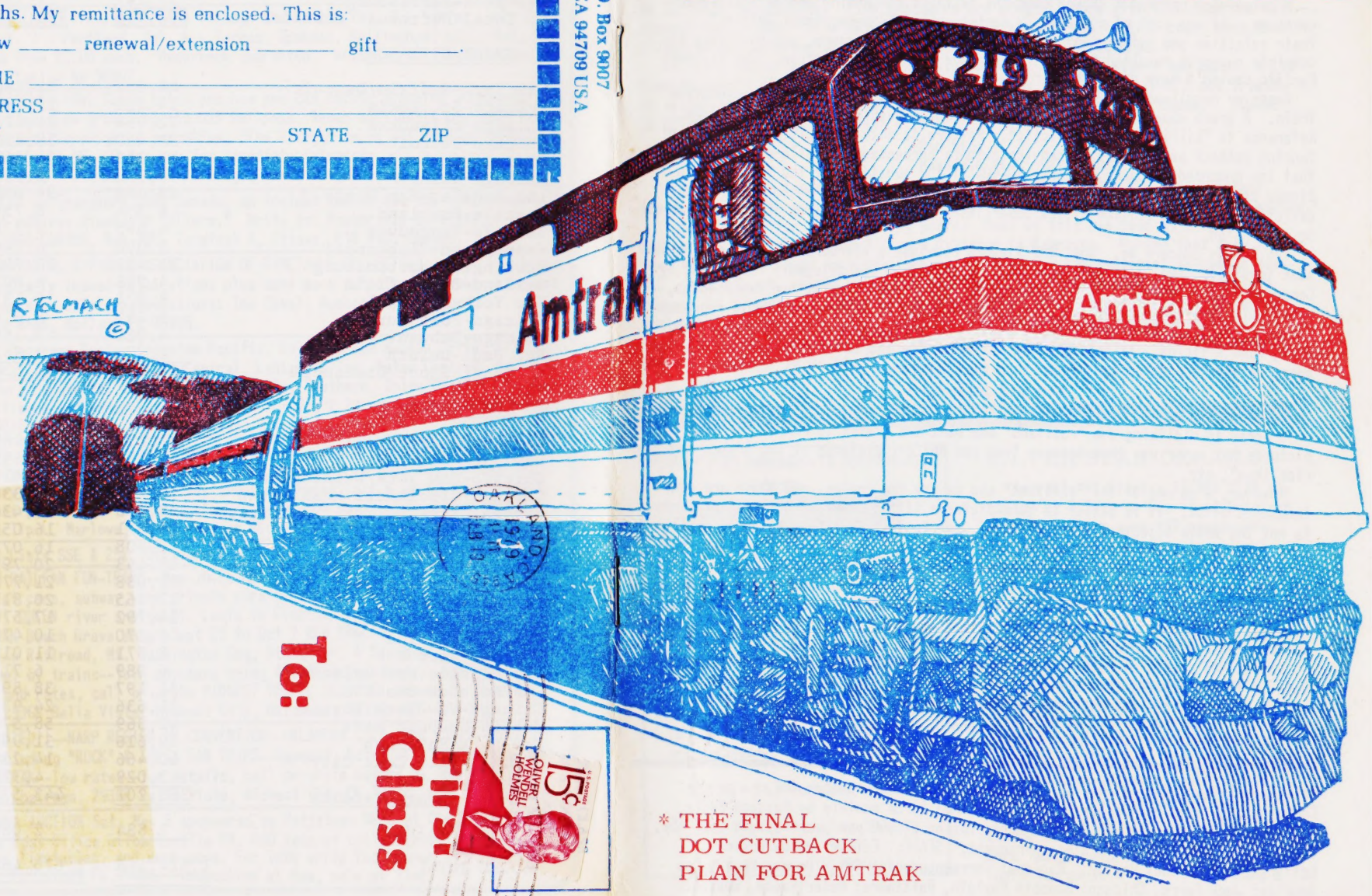

* THE FINAL DOT CUTBACK PLAN FOR AMTRAK

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

(R) 2-21-79

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VOL. 9 NO. 2
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ON THE COVER

Amtrak F40 engine no. 219 introduces our issue devoted in large part to the Department of Transportation's final report on the proposed cutback of the Amtrak system. Illustration by Richard Tolmach, courtesy of Caltrans.

LETTERS

A television program I viewed over the holidays concerning Amtrak greatly concerns me. It was part of a public TV series called "Congressional Outlook". Their selection and omission of topics, various factual errors, and obviously incomplete research resulted in a misleading and biased presentation. The Missouri Pacific couldn't have done a better job.

Among my recollections: use of the SHENANDOAH as an apparently representative train. A graph appearing to show Amtrak patronage hasn't grown since it began. Reference to "billion dollar deficits". Failure to note the multiplier effect of funcing cutback percentages on service cutback percentages. Failure to explain that the proposed cutbacks are only 30-40% of the subsidy, not the full oft-mentioned billion dollars. Little substantial discussion of the reasons for the deficit growth. No mention of the Superliners under construction for the routes to be eliminated.

Two things concern me. One: the viewers received a misrepresentation of the issues involved. Two, and most important: this program was allegedly researched by Congressional Quarterly. CQ has a good reputation (and from my own experiences, reasonably well-deserved by journalistic standards) of fair and accurate representation of issues. Many editors rely heavily on their reports for editorials and background articles. If that program reflected how the CQ staff perceives the issues, we have a problem far bigger than that program.

Bob Clark, Jr.
Houston, Texas

I agree in disliking the "railfans" who want the trains to run so they can take pictures but never use them because "you can not get pictures of the trains if you ride them", etc.

However, I am one of the "railfans" who do use the trains, and there are many thousands of us. It is easier to take pictures if you drive, but taking pictures is not the whole object of a trip. And I want to feel that I am doing my small part to help keep the trains running. In addition, I am not only a railfan, but am one of the additional thousands who will not drive if it is possible to avoid it, because of its hazards, its complete lack of relaxation, and of the endless succession of Host Motels, Exxon, McDonalds, tourist traps, etc. along all our highways, which make the whole country alike, and make travel for pleasure a farce. Further, when I am forced to drive, I NEVER use the Interstates...

Amtrak has plenty of room for improvement, but it is all we have and we must keep it in its present form until it can be improved. If we kill it now, we will end up with nothing--not even the Northeast Corridor.

John J. Bowman, Jr.
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Rail Travel News, Vol. 9, No. 2. February, 1979. Whole number 184.
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Now that the Brock Adams plan for dismembering Amtrak has been announced, it is important to remember two things:

(1) Do not take a "fall back" position in an attempt to be "reasonable." The Sierra Club, for example, learned long ago to fight from an extreme position--because to start out with compromise will mean still further compromise. A "reasonable" position would never be seen as anything but something subject to further compromise.

(2) Never, never minimize the importance of postcards and letters. The National Rifle Association, for example--a substantial minority--has managed to stifle all sorts of legislation by its ability to get thousands of individual pieces of mail to descend upon Washington.

The "will of the people" is expressed by mail--which is "weighed" not so much on merit as on quantity. Five postcards are probably more effective than one well-thought-out letter. Five brief letters (just a paragraph or two) count more than a logical and informed analysis of the transportation structure.

All rail supporters should each write 10 or 20 or more letters and cards. Write them on behalf of friends--get permission to sign their names. Don't ask friends to write--they never will; they are not committed enough to the "cause." VOLUME OF RESPONSE AND REACTION IS THE KEY.

Don Bice
Mountain View, California

I wish to take issue with the statement in the EMPIRE BUILDER article (last issue) that "BN is not making it and seems to be another Penn Central in the making."

I have worked for BN now for 3½ years. Most of this has been as a train dispatcher on the coal-hauling Alliance Division in Nebraska. During that time I have seen my employer spend many millions on all kinds of improvements; to name a few--CTC, double track, welded rail, new shops and yards in Alliance, etc. Surely a company in financial trouble would not be making these improvements on the grand scale they are being made here. And the improvements continue to be made...

So I will stick by BN. It has been the most successful of recent rail mergers and will continue to be so.

Jim Hollis
Alliance, Nebraska

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SILVER STAR DERAILS

Amtrak's NY-Florida SILVER STAR derailed at 6:20am on Feb 11 at McIntosh, Georgia. There were 432 passengers aboard the train running in a 79mph zone on welded rail, straight track, when a wheel of the lead axle of the trailing truck of the third car, the lead sleeper #2766 "Savannah", a car bound for Miami, broke and caused the train to derail 12 cars. There were 34 passengers and two crew members reported injured, but only two were hospitalized and were reported in satisfactory condition. The wheel had apparently cracked some time earlier and had slid down the axle, pulling the other wheel in. When the train hit a frog in the track, the wheel broke and caused the derailment. Passengers were loaded into 14 buses to continue their journeys.

page 3

★★★ DOT SEEKS DEEPER AMTRAK CUTS AS SERIOUS ENERGY CRISIS LOOMS

Transportation Secretary Brock Adams rode a Metroliner to New York's Penn Station on Jan 31, where he dramatically announced his final plan for cutting back the Amtrak system. The final DOT report is summarized in this issue, starting on page 8 (the preliminary DOT plan was reported on in RTN #173).

The final plan was very close to the draft version we published last issue, and calls for cutting out about 12,000 of Amtrak's 27,700 route miles, or almost 43% of the system. In presenting the plan, DOT appeared to reject virtually all of the recommendations of the ICC that followed the extensive public hearings of last summer. The final route plan is even more stringent than the DOT's original plan, leaving Amtrak users only 15,700 route miles instead of 18,900 in the first plan. Congress has 90 calendar days of continuous session in which to disapprove the plan--if not, it automatically becomes law. Thus May 15 is the final date for any action by Congress. The revised system would have to be implemented in the next fiscal year, beginning Oct 1, 1979.

But even as Adams was speaking, a threatening situation was developing in the Mideast that would take over newspaper headlines for the coming weeks and might even negate all the rail cutback plans of the administration. Iran, which produces 10% of the world's oil and 10% of America's imported oil, had had its oil production cut back by strikes since late November because of political turmoil. Rail-oriented transportation officials complained that the administration was withholding a grim prediction about fuel supplies even while it was announcing the proposed Amtrak cutbacks. Then the following day, Feb 1, Iranian Moslem leader Khomeini returned from exile to spearhead a political coup that would mean probable complete stoppage of Iranian oil exports for many months. As February moved on, day by day the fuel reports became grimmer, with some gas stations already closing on Sundays because of short supplies, some airline flights being cancelled for lack of fuel, and calls by the President for the American public to drive less and use more public transportation.

Some rail observers feel that the impending energy crisis, which officials believe is likely more serious than the 1973-74 energy crisis that saw Amtrak ridership climb sharply, is the key to the battle to save the Amtrak route system. Washington sources indicate that it is essential that the "people back home make their views about Amtrak known to their legislators."

The following steps were suggested by NARP for those wishing to voice support for the rail passenger system: (1) Write your own Congressman and Senators (the address of all Congressmen is: House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515; the address of all Senators is: U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510); (2) Write to four key Congressmen who will heavily influence Amtrak legislation. They are: Rep. James Florio of New Jersey; Rep. Harley Staggers of West Virginia; Rep. Russell Long of Louisiana; and Rep. Howard Cannon of Nevada (use the House of Representatives address given above). In the House, 218 signers of resolutions disapproving the DOT plan are needed to get a vote on the House floor. House Resolution (HR) 93 has already been proposed by Rahall of West Virginia, HR 105 by Glickman of Kansas, and HR 107 by Jeffords of Vermont.

RTN will carry more information on this critical matter elsewhere in this issue and in succeeding issues.

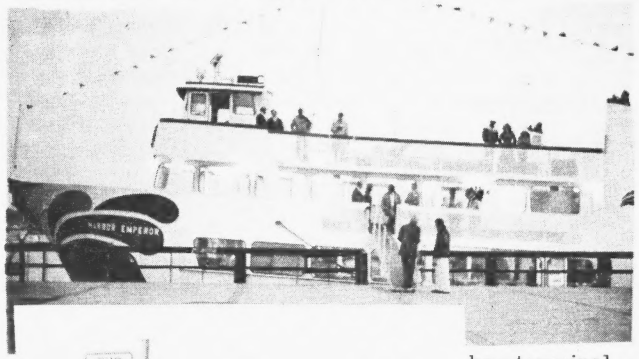
RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR HEARINGS SET

The proposed cutback of Rio Grande's RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR will be the subject of public hearings held by the ICC starting in late February (earlier than reported here previously). Dates and locations of hearings are as follows: Feb 26, Salt Lake City: 3421 Federal Bldg, 125 S. State St. Feb 28, Helper: Helper City Audi-

 (continued on page 20)

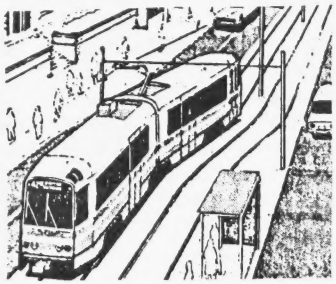
URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

ALTERNATIVES TO BART: FREE BUSES AND THE FERRY



Photos from Message Media.

With the BART transbay tube still inoperative after the Jan 17 fire in a BART train on the transbay line, commuters have been provided with free-fare shuttle buses between the BART MacArthur station and San Francisco's transbay terminal. At rush hours seemingly every available charter bus--from AC Transit, Trailways, Greyhound, etc., and even an Amtrak-painted bus that also carries rail passengers between Oakland and San Francisco--is used in a continuous stream of vehicles across the Bay Bridge. About 700 buses cross the bridge each morning. Investigators are convinced that the tube has not been structurally damaged, but they must see more convincing evidence that BART can safely deal with another problem like the January incident before the PUC will allow the service to resume. Startup likely won't be before well into March. BART said that on Feb 17 it will begin charging 50¢ per roundtrip for the shuttle bus. At 7:05am on Feb 8 the first regularly-scheduled ferry service from Berkeley to S. F. in 43 years--and the first from the Eastbay since the last Southern Pacific ferry ran in 1958--made its inaugural run (see top photo). With very short notice to the public, there were only about 25 people aboard. The vessel "Harbor Emperor", run by private operator Harbor Carriers Inc., can hold 500 people. It makes one roundtrip daily (until the BART tube reopens) at a one-way fare of $1.50.



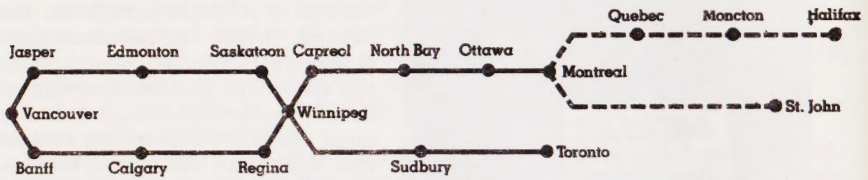
A RETURN OF the 42nd Street Trolley in Manhattan was proposed by the City Planning Commission Jan 22. Light rail vehicles would be cheaper and less polluting than buses, the study said. (See drawing.)

FEDERAL TRANSIT OFFICIALS told Los Angeles in January that they can't provide money for the proposed 18-mile subway, and funds for bus procurement were cut in half as well.

RAIL CANADA

THE VIA CANADIAN--some observations by Duane Roller:

Equipment: Unchanged except for an added VIA Dayniter and a sleeper-as-dorm (usually a VIA 24-rmt car). Crews: Service crews are all VIA, and are pooled withthe SUPER CONTINENTAL, so that they may work one direction on one train and back on the other. VIA uniforms are worn by dining car and sleeping car crews, including the sleeping car conductor (who no longer changes at Calgary). Train crews are still CP. Dining Car: VIA menus. Greater variety of food, but some elegance lost with paper napkins & stainless steel. Crews larger, mostly young men and women with enthusiasm & ineptitude. Interline Operations: (1) Portage-la-Prairie: Two hand-thrown switches west of depot; crossover takes about 10mins. (2) Winnipeg: Leave on CN & cross Red River; at Beach Jct turn north via CTC switches to 40mph track; go 4.0 miles to Manson where two hand-thrown switches return to CP. Time 25 minutes. (3) Parry Sound: About 1 mile south of South Parry, where CP & CN are side-by-side, cross over from Boyne on CP to Reynolds on CN. Backup movement required & switches hand-thrown. Time 10mins if no wait for clearance, which can be about 15mins. (4) Crews operate thru the junctions (i.e., a CP train crew still operates from Sudbury to Toronto). Unsubstantiated rumours about difficulties: long waits for clearance onto CN at Portage & Reynolds, & CN refusal to service engines at Winnipeg, requiring delays at Kenora. Problems: Besides the switching between railroads, greater train length causes servicing problems at stations & steam problems in winter. VIA trains now run up to 14 cars.



The schematic map above, shown in current VIA ads, indicates the two transcon routes and connections to the Maritime Provinces. The SUPER CONTINENTAL runs on the northern route Vancouver-Montreal while the CANADIAN takes the southern route Vancouver-Toronto, with the two meeting at Winnipeg and exchanging thru cars.

VIA TRAIN 663 derailed Feb 4 at Shakespeare, Ontario. The train, with 140 passengers in 4 coaches behind a steam generator car and one engine, was struck by a sub-compact automobile at the level crossing with highway 59. All four coaches derailed but remained upright after the auto hit the second coach. There were no train injuries, but two of the three car occupants were killed. Blowing snow made visibility poor, and it is estimated that the car was speeding. CN's Guelph District was closed for the rest of the day, with trains 664, 665, 666, 85 & 668 cancelled or curtailed. Service was restored early the following day.

VIA RAIL CANADA President Roberts told the Canadian Press and Le Droit in late January that he still hopes to trim the transcon service to the CP lines only. The CN-CP-VIA services in 1978 had an overall ridership increase of 14% over 1977. Mr. Roberts also said that VIA's LRC train will start running Montreal-Quebec at the end of 1979, with regular service starting in spring of 1980. (The LRC for Amtrak's PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL will reportedly be ready this coming summer.) Roberts said VIA will rehabilitate the CP fleet ("It would cost $1 million for a new car and $1.3 million for a new locomotive, so this is a strong argument for keeping what we have").

OPINIONS ABOUT THE AMTRAK CUTBACK

Rail supporters close to the Washington scene are gloomy about the DOT cutback plan. They are pessimistic because a great many of the most influential newspapers in the U.S. have editorialized in favor of the cuts. These include the NY Times, Wall Street Journal, New York News, Los Angeles Times, Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, Washington Star and Seattle Times (to mention only those whose clippings we have in hand). Paper opposing Amtrak cuts included the Atlanta Constitution, the Long Beach (CA) Independent Press-Telegram, the Meriden (CT) Morning Record and Journal, the Hartford (CT) Courant, and the UTU News. The Chicago Sun Times ran a Mauldin cartoon critical of the DOT (Feb 2).

The California Dept. of Transportation sent a letter to Brock Adams Feb 9 criticizing the plan. Caltrans said the plan "does not answer the question of how to improve rail passenger service--it simply wields an axe on those patrons of the Amtrak system deemed politically vulnerable." Caltrans continued, "the alleged savings are minor, and ... they do not justify the 43% cut in the Amtrak route system. The $166 million savings claimed for 1980 amount to less than 1% of the Federal transportation budget. This would build about 6/10 of a mile of the Westsay or about 4 miles of freeway in Southern California. For this, we would lose over 10,000 miles of rail service." We have received other important replies to the DOT plan which we intend to publish but which will not fit in this issue.

RTN'S OWN VIEW: The DOT plan is not a responsible transportation plan, but is merely a budgetary slap at vulnerable rail passenger service, which lacks the money and political clout of the gigantic oil, highway and auto interests. Even if no energy crisis were building, the responsible thing for the U.S. to do would be to continue the support and regeneration of our national rail passenger system because the public wants it, and needs it for many reasons. The oil shortage beginning to hit us makes it absolutely imperative that the national rail system be retained without cutbacks--indeed, it should be increased as soon as possible. A responsible Congress should keep the system unchanged and give new Amtrak president Boyd time to work out the improvements he has begun, in an orderly fashion.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"I think anybody who would attempt to take even one passenger train from the American people also kicks small dogs, eats with his fingers, and doesn't love the Lord. I think Brock Adams, who is secretary of transportation and who wants to slice away at what remains of the nation's passenger trains, should find another job. ...Brock Adams says he is trying to save a buck by cutting Amtrak, the federally-funded passenger train network, almost in half. What Congress gives Amtrak isn't a pea in the budget dish. You couldn't pave the road from here to Rockmart for the comparative pittance Amtrak gets to operate a nationwide system."

--Lewis Grizzard in the Atlanta Constitution, Feb 3.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

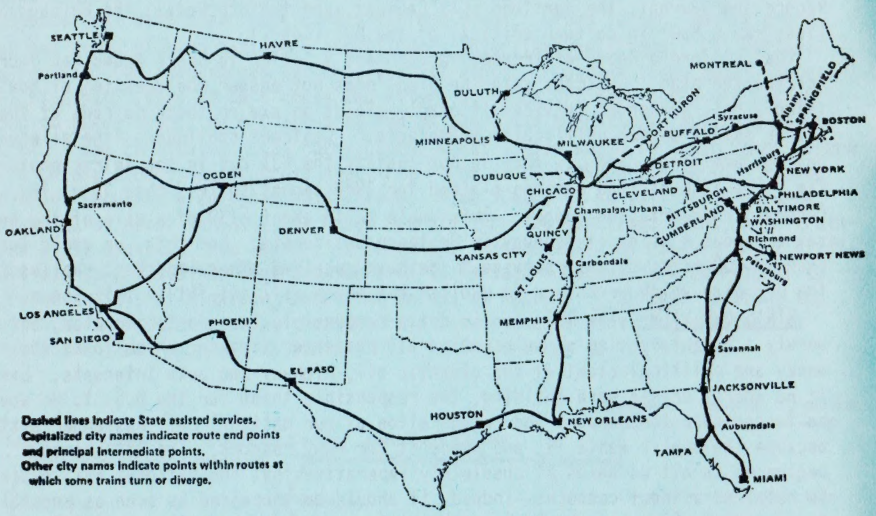
"NEW YORK--The question is not 'whether, but when' Americans will be forced to conserve gasoline with measures like Sunday service station closings, Sen. Henry Jackson said yesterday.

"With the current rent problems in Iran, 'there isn't any question that we will have to shortly undertake a program of allocations,' said Jackson, D-Wash., chairman of the Senate Energy Committee."

--News item in The Daily Californian (Berkeley), Feb 12.

(A new landlord took over the Shah's palace.)

DOT'S FINAL PLAN FOR AMTRAK



RECOMMENDED AMTRAK ROUTE SYSTEM

The recommended route structure serves 22 of the nation's 25 largest population centers, 39 of the largest 50 cities and 40 states. It provides a basic national service grid, with east/west routes in the northern, central and southern regions of the country and north/south routes along the Eastern Seaboard, in the Midwest and on the West Coast. The national service grid is supplemented by a system of short-distance trains linking major population centers and feeding passengers into the national service grid. All currently operating state-supported 403(b) services are included in the recommended route system, provided there is continued state support for them.

The recommended route structure contains 43 percent fewer route-miles than the current Amtrak system (including the Southern Crescent) and during Fiscal Year 1980 it will produce 34 percent fewer train-miles than the current system would have produced in that year. However, the recommended system will retain approximately 80 percent of the passenger-miles that the current system would have produced in Fiscal Year 1980, and it will continue to serve 91 percent of the passengers who would have used the system during that year. The recommended system will also produce an improvement of 32 passenger-miles per train-mile compared to what the current system would have produced in Fiscal Year 1980, reflecting the elimination of the very weak routes and the restructuring of other routes.

TRAIN-BY-TRAIN COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND RECOMMENDED SYSTEM
(NON-NORTHEAST CORRIDOR ONLY)

Train Name	Train Route	Recommendation	Comments
Adirondack	NYG-MTL	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
Palmetto	NYP-WAS-SAV	Continue	
Niagara Rainbow	NYG-BUF-NIA	Continue	
Empire State Express	NYG-BUF-NIA	Continue	
Henry Hudson	NYG-ALB	Continue	
Washington Irving	NYG-ALB	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
Dewitt Clinton	NYG-ALB	Continue	
Salt City Express	NYG-SYR	Continue	
Twilight Limited	CHI-DET	Continue	
Blue Water Limited	CHI-PTH	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
Saint Clair	CHI-DET	Continue	
Wolverine	CHI-DET	Continue	
Michigan Executive	DET-JXN	Continue	If Section 18 funding provided.
Turboliners	CHI-MIL	Continue	
North Star	CHI-MSP-DUL	Continue	Operate north of MSP only if 403(b) funding provided.
Inter-American	CHI-STL-DAL-LDO	Restructure	Operate north of St. Louis only
State House	CHI-STL	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
Ann Rutledge	CHI-STL	Continue	
Black Hawk	CHI-DUB	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
Southwest Limited	CHI-KCY-ABQ-LAX	Restructure	Combine with S.F. Zephyr and reroute via Denver.
Illinois Zephyr	CHI-QUI	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
Illini	CHI-CHM	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
Panama Limited	CHI-MEM-NOL	Continue	
Shawnee	CHI-CAR	Continue	
Empire Builder	CHI-MSP-HAV-SEA	Continue	Tri-weekly in off-peak
Coast Starlight	SEA-PDX-OAK-LAX	Continue	
San Diegans	LAX-SAN	Continue	Three of six frequencies contingent on continuation of current state assistance.
Colonial	BOS-WAS-NPN	Continue	
Broadway Limited	NYP-PHL-PGH-CHI	Restructure	Reroute via Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Toledo.
	WAS-PHL-PGH-CHI	Restructure	Combine with Shenandoah and reroute via Cumberland.
Shenandoah	WAS-CUM-CIN	Restructure	Combine with Washington leg of Broadway and reroute to Pittsburgh.
Silver Star	NY-WAS-JAX-STP NY-WAS-JAX-MIA	Continue	Operate via Orlando; split at Auburndale to Tampa and Miami.
Lake Shore Limited	NY-BUF-CLE-CHI BOS-BUF-CLE-CHI	Restructure Restructure	Reroute via Niagara Falls and Detroit.

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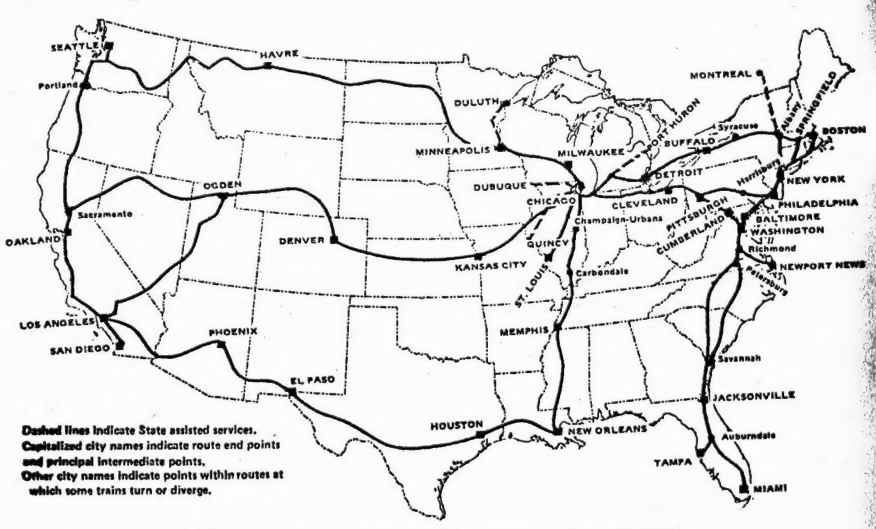
DOT'S FINAL PLAN FOR AMTRAK



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Henry Hudson	NYG-ALB	Continue	
Washington Irving	NYG-ALB	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
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Salt City Express	NYG-SYR	Continue	
Twilight Limited	CHI-DET	Continue	
Blue Water Limited	CHI-PTH	Continue	If 403(b) funding provided.
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Wolverine	CHI-DET	Continue	
Michigan Executive	DET-JXN	Continue	If Section 18 funding provided.
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Table continued on next page

Train Name	Train Route	Recommendation	Comments
Blue Ridge	WAS-MAR	Continue	Weekend only; weekday if section 18 funding is provided.
San Francisco Zephyr	CHI-DEN-OGD-OAK	Restructure	Combine with Southwest Limited and reroute via Kansas City.
Sunset Limited	NOL-HOU-PHX-LAX	Continue	
Pioneer	SLC-OGD-PDX-SEA	Discontinue	
National Limited	NY-PHL-PGH-KCY	Discontinue	Service will remain available between New York and Pittsburgh via the Broadway Limited.
Montrealer	WAS-NYP-MTL	Discontinue	Corridor portion still operates. NYG-MTL service will remain available via the Adirondack if 403(b) funding is continued.
Silver Meteor	NYP-WAS-JAX-MIA	Discontinue	Service will remain available between most cities via either the Palmetto or the Silver Star
Champion	NYP-WAS-JAX-STP	Discontinue	Service will remain available via the Silver Star.
Cardinal	WAS-CIN-CHI	Discontinue	WAS-CHI service via rerouted Broadway.
Hilltopper	BOS-WAS-PTB-TSS	Discontinue	Corridor portion still operates Service will remain available between Washington and Petersburg.
North Coast Hiawatha	CHI-MSP-BIL-SEA	Discontinue	Service will remain available to some cities via the Empire Builder.
Lone Star	CHI-KCY-DAL CHI-KCY-HOU	Discontinue Discontinue	Service will remain available between Chicago and Kansas City via the Southwest Limited.
Southern Crescent	NYP-NOL	Discontinue	Corridor portion still operates
Floridian	CHI-BHM-JAX-STP CHI-BHM-JAX-MIA	Discontinue Discontinue	
San Joaquin	BAK-OAK	Discontinue	
Mount Rainer	SEA-PDX	Discontinue	Service will remain available via the Coast Starlight.
Pacific International	VAN-SEA	Discontinue	

	Current System	Recommended System
Route-miles (Thousands)	27.5[1]	15.7
Passengers (Millions)	19.6	17.9
Passenger-miles (Billions)	4.6	3.7
Train-miles (Thousands)	32.6	21.5
Passenger-miles per Train-mile	141	173

[1]As of February 1, 1979. Includes the Southern Crescent in the Amtrak system and excludes the portion of the Niagara Rainbow west of Niagara Falls, New York that is to be terminated on that date.

SERVICE RECOMMENDATION FOR TRAINS OUTSIDE THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR[1]

Train Name	Train Route	Frequency	Average Speed[2] (mph)	Service Offered
Adirondack	NYG-MTL	Daily	44	Coach
Palmetto	NYP-WAS-SAV	Daily	56	Coach
Niagara Rainbow	NYG-BUF-NIA	Daily	47	Coach
Empire State Express	NYG-BUF-NIA	Daily	51	Coach
Henry Hudson	NYG-ALB	Daily	51	Coach
Washington Irving	NYG-ALB	Daily	51	Coach
Dewitt Clinton	NYG-ALB	Daily	51	Coach
Salt City Express	NYG-SYR	Daily	53	Coach
Twilight Limited	CHI-DET	Daily	51	Coach
Blue Water Limited	CHI-PTH	Daily	51	Coach
Saint Clair	CHI-DET	Daily	51	Coach
Wolverine	CHI-DET	Daily	51	Coach
Michigan Executive	DET-JXN	Weekdays Only[3]	44	Coach
Turboliners	CHI-MIL	27 Round-trip/Wk.	57	Coach
North Star	CHI-MSP-DUL	Daily	44	Coach/Sleeper
Inter-American	CHI-STL	Daily	52	Coach
State House	CHI-STL	Daily	52	Coach
Ann Rutledge	CHI-STL	Daily	52	Coach
Black Hawk	CHI-DUB	Daily	43	Coach
Southwest Limited	CHI-KC-DEN-OGD-LAX	Daily	50	Coach/Sleeper
San Francisco Zephyr	OGD-OAK	Daily	46	Coach/Sleeper
Illinois Zephyr	CHI-QUI	Daily	56	Coach
Illini	CHI-CHM	Daily	52	Coach
Panama Limited	CHI-MEM-NOL	Daily	50	Coach/Sleeper
Shawnee	CHI-CAR	Daily	55	Coach
Empire Builder	CHI-MSP-HAV-SEA	3/Week - Daily[4]	49	Coach/Sleeper
Coast Starlight	SEA-PDX-OAK-LAX	Daily	42	Coach/Sleeper
San Diegans	LAX-SAN	6 Round-trips/Day	49	Coach
Colonial	BOS-WAS-NPN	Daily	46	Coach
Broadway Limited	NYP-PHL-PGH-CLE-CHI	Daily	48	Coach/Sleeper
Shenandoah	WAS-CUM-PGH	Daily	38	Coach/Sleeper
Silver Star	NYP-WAS-JAX-MIA/TPA	Daily	48	Coach/Sleeper
Lake Shore Limited	NYG-BUF-DET-CHI	Daily	49	Coach/Sleeper
	BOS-ALB	Daily	40	Coach/Sleeper
Blue Ridge	WAS-MAR	Daily[3]	43	Coach
Sunset Limited	NOL-HOU-ELP-PHX-LAX	3/Week	47	Coach/Sleeper

[1]The Northeast Corridor Improvement Project Redirection Study, January 1979, discusses future services, frequencies and speeds for trains operating in the Northeast Corridor. Pending implementation of these future services, the recommended system includes continuation of current services in the Northeast Corridor.

[2]Amtrak current schedule time, including station stops, on existing routings and estimated schedule time on new routings.

[3]Weekday service is contingent on execution of a section 18 agreement.

[4]Three times per week during off-peak periods; daily during peak periods.

Train Name	Train Route	Recommendation	Comments
Blue Ridge	WAS-MAR	Continue	Weekend only; weekday if section 18 funding is provided.
San Francisco Zephyr	CHI-DEN-OGD-OAK	Restructure	Combine with Southwest Limited and reroute via Kansas City.
Sunset Limited	NOL-HOU-PHX-LAX	Continue	
Pioneer	SLC-OGD-PDX-SEA	Discontinue	
National Limited	NY-PHL-PGH-KCY	Discontinue	Service will remain available between New York and Pittsburgh via the Broadway Limited.
Montrealer	WAS-NYP-MTL	Discontinue	Corridor portion still operates. NYG-MTL service will remain available via the Adirondack if 403(b) funding is continued.
Silver Meteor	NYP-WAS-JAX-MIA	Discontinue	Service will remain available between most cities via either the Palmetto or the Silver Star
Champion	NYP-WAS-JAX-STP	Discontinue	Service will remain available via the Silver Star.
Cardinal	WAS-CIN-CHI	Discontinue	WAS-CHI service via rerouted Broadway.
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ESTIMATED PERFORMANCE OF RECOMMENDED SYSTEM
IN FISCAL YEAR 1980

	Route	Passenger Miles (PM) (millions)	Train Miles (TM) (millions)	PM/TM	Revenues (millions)	Cost[1] (Millions)	Loss Per Passenger Mile (cents)
	NATIONAL SERVICES						
	OVERNIGHT						
	Los Angeles-Seattle	234.16	1.013	231	$14.076	$ 50.705	15.6
2	NY-Savannah-Florida	501.07	1.500	334	36.393	73.550	7.4
	NY/Bos-Chi via Det.	198.49	.871	228	13.636	39.004	12.8
	NY/Wash-Chi via Cle.	198.59	.884	225	13.772	44.019	15.2
	Chicago-New Orleans	105.31	.674	156	5.956	22.845	16.0
	Chicago-LAX/Oakland	444.38	2.387	186	27.795	117.012	20.1
	New Orleans-LAX	126.03	.633	199	7.285	24.517	13.7
	Chicago-Seattle	199.0	1.032	193	11.605	36.775	12.6
3	Chicago-Duluth	82.43	.417	198	5.355	16.159	13.1
	DAYTIME						
	Chicago-Milwaukee	21.76	.248	88	1.553	8.358	31.3
4	Boston-Newport News	16.83	.139	121	1.262	3.900	15.7
	Washington-Martinsburg	8.12	.053	153	.409	2.786	29.3
	Chicago-Detroit	59.36	.611	97	4.405	16.159	19.8
	Chicago-Carbondale	19.18	.226	85	1.252	5.015	19.6
	NYC-Syracuse	16.73	.209	80	1.167	6.129	29.7
	NYC-Niagara Falls	64.64	.679	95	4.506	20.616	24.9
5	NYC-Albany	26.93	.313	85	1.878	8.915	26.1
6	Los Angeles-San Diego	78.65	.561	140	5.046	19.502	18.4
5	Chicago-St. Louis	48.54	.618	79	3.449	16.159	26.2
	STATE-ASSISTED						
	Chicago-Dubuque	5.51	.133	41	.355	2.786	44.1
	Chicago-Champaign	5.65	.094	60	.371	2.229	32.7
	Chicago-Pt. Huron	10.52	.252	71	1.087	6.129	30.5
	Chicago-Quincy	15.17	.192	79	1.033	4.458	22.6
4	Detroit-Jackson	3.08	.039	79	.143	1.672	49.6
	NYC-Montreal	25.29	.274	92	1.752	7.801	23.9
	TOTAL NON-NEC	2521.5	14.0	180	165.5[7]	557.200	14.9[8]
	NEC	1190.0	7.5	159	143.3	320.000	14.8
	OTHER NON-NEC REVENUE	N/A	N/A	N/A	16.4	N/A	N/A
	SYSTEM TOTAL	3711.5	21.5	173	$325.2	$877.200	14.9

[1]Costs shown represent each route's share of total system costs (excluding depreciation).
[2]Includes a daytime New York-Savannah train.
[3]Includes a state-assisted service between Minneapolis and Duluth.
[4]Includes significant commuter ridership.
[5]Includes one state-assisted frequency.
[6]Includes three state-assisted frequencies.
[7]Includes only transportation, food and beverage, and mail revenue.
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NARP REPLIES TO THE DOT

The National Association of Railroad Passengers gave the following response to the DOT plan at a press conference in Washington on February 1.

The DOT proposal to reduce Amtrak services:

--conflicts with the public's desires as expressed
  (a.) in opinion polls conducted by Peter Hart Associates for DOT and by Louis Harris for Amtrak;
  (b.) in the public hearings conducted at over 50 locations across the nation last summer;
  (c.) through ridership increases everywhere but especially where decent service has been provided (LA-San Diego riding up 142% 1973 to FY 1978, though frequency of service only went up 100%, from 3 to 6 daily roundtrips);
  (d.) through dramatic ridership increases during the 1973-4 energy crisis;

--conflicts with the need of the U. S. to conserve petroleum for
  (a.) our own future generations;
  (b.) our allies -- Japanese motorists have recently been asked to cut driving by 20% and stay off freeways on holidays;
  (c.) developing nations where, partly due to their emulation of the U. S., energy use is now skyrocketing;
  (d.) improving our trade balance; and
  (e.) protecting our national security from possible reductions in foreign energy supplies;

--contrary to the statement of Secretary Adams, will not provide improved service over the surviving route miles, 2,985 of which would have less frequent service than at present;

--cannot possibly serve the stated 91% of the existing passengers. Amtrak does not have reliable information on which passengers transfer between which trains. DOT does not know the impact on surviving services of eliminating such cities as Dallas, Atlanta, and Indianapolis from the system. Furthermore, the 91% is a distorted figure because it must include North east Corridor ridership.;

--eliminates service over approximately 7,500 route miles that were included in DOT's preliminary plan and therefore received little attention in the series of RSPO hearings last summer. For example, northern Arizona and New Mexico and southern Kansas and Oklahoma would actually have enjoyed improved service under the preliminary plan and now would get no service at all. RSPO did not even hold hearings in those areas.;

--would force the U. S. to undertake massive expenditures to reinstitute service in the future, in a fashion similar to what has occurred in urban mass transit (e.g. abandonment of Pacific Electric in Los Angeles, followed by painful fight over building costly new subway).

NARP believes good service over the network approved by its own Board would attract satisfactory ridership immediately, and put the U. S. in a good position to confront another energy crisis. The DOT's preliminary report showed that the largest system considered produced the lowest deficit per passenger mile. (p. 5-13 of May report)

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The DOT report just released notes several problems with service quality which have hampered marketing efforts to date:

--On-time performance down from 1972 to 1978 (p. 2-8);
--Various locomotive problems involving slower-than-necessary schedules; train cancellations; and excessive fuel consumption (pp. 2-3/4);
--Unreliable heating and air-conditioning which, contrary to implications of the DOT report (p. 2-3), have not been corrected on the vast majority of long-distance trains. Introduction of the new superliners is expected to solve this for the Western routes over the next few years. Conversion programs have been authorized for the Broadway and Lake Shore Limited in the East.;
--Car maintenance problems increasing costs and decreasing the amount of patronage existing schedules can handle (p. 2-6 and 3-9).

Amtrak has been attacking these problems and laying the groundwork for a major ridership increase. This has progressed slowly because of inadequate capital funding--which problem will continue under the DOT plan. Fare increases at rates higher than the Transportation Price Index would in effect force the passenger to pay for failures in public policy, while driving away riders. DOT implies advocacy of a far stiffer peak period surcharge than any other mode encounters, and little capacity to meet peaks, also unique in public transport which is largely geared to handle peaks.

We fear the results of DOT's policy would be to restrict trains to the rich, thereby handing DOT an argument it could use in future years to defend still more cutbacks.

One attempt to project a tripling of intercity passenger miles by the year 2000 while holding energy consumption constant relied on regular passenger trains for 350 billion passenger-miles/year. DOT would cut Amtrak from 4.6 billion to 3.7 billion. This is a move in the wrong direction.

"If we were to have an oil embargo now like the one we had in 1973, the United States would be on its knees in 120 days," according to Frederick Johnson, of the Dept of Energy's strategic planning office (quoted in Traffic World, Jan. 29, editorial).

Developing the rail system would also enable more freight to be handled on the rails, improving safety and reducing costs on the highway system.

ROUTE-BY-ROUTE DISCUSSION

SAN JOAQUIN (Oakland-Bakersfield): Caltrans would like to subsidize the extension of this run into Los Angeles which would drastically increase ridership, but Southern Pacific is obstructing new services.

NORTH COAST HIAWATHA (Chicago-Bismarck-Billings-Seattle): This route has constantly been hampered by unreliable performance and frequent schedule changes. If continued, it would likely be helped by rerouting through Helena, the capital of Montana.

LONE STAR (Chicago-Oklahoma-Dallas/Houston): NARP has long called for realigning Texas north-south services so they would run straight south from Dallas, the biggest market, rather than Ft. Worth. The full train should run Ft. Worth-Dallas-Waco-Houston and its performance would be improved by (a.) picking up Waco, and providing direct Dallas-Houston service; (b.) eliminating the costs of switching in Ft. Worth and running a separate Ft. Worth-Dallas section; (c.) providing a shorter route between Temple and Houston (using MKT Sealy-Houston).

INTER-AMERICAN (Chicago-St. Louis-Little Rock-Dallas-Ft. Worth-Austin-San Antonio-Laredo): As with the Lone Star, this train should head directly south from Dallas to improve running times between key cities. It has enjoyed dramatic ridership increases recently (November up 36.4%). Station problems in San Antonio.

FLORIDIAN (Chicago-Louisville-Nashville-Jacksonville-Miami/St. Petersburg): NARP and others have fought a long hard campaign to get this train re-routed through Atlanta and Indianapolis. It also has heavy ridership within Florida, especially between Waldo (for the university at Gainesville) and Miami.

NEW YORK-FLORIDA: The DOT report recommends cutting back from three daily trains to one, plus continuing the daylight NY-Savannah "Palmetto". This is Amtrak's most successful long-distance route and would suffer a dramatic decrease in capacity, as well as the following specific service eliminations: Charleston-Fayetteville (eastern) route in Carolinas would lose service to points south of Savannah; all service would be discontinued to the Waldo (western) line in northern Florida serving U. of Fla.; assuming Amtrak uses the heaviest travel pattern (Champion/Meteor schedules), cities served at convenient hours now by the Silver Star only would lose convenient service (Raleigh area; Richmond northbound; Jacksonville southbound). We find it hard to believe DOT's claim 81% of existing passengers would be served, unless one assumes people don't care what time of day they ride, and many extra sections would be operated. DOT implies, however, that very high peak fares would discourage peak ridership.

SOUTHERN CRESCENT: Secretary Adams says this train suffers from low ridership, yet SR's statistics presented to the ICC showed 1976 and 1977 ridership figures both up from year-before, and this train has uniquely been excluded from Amtrak's promotional campaigns. SR has not advertised the route since 1976, but Amtrak has just started a promotional effort timed with its Feb. 1 takeover of the train: advertising; new fares; consolidating stations with other Amtrak trains in Birmingham and Charlottesville; and eliminating SR's restrictions on riding between certain points. ICC did not grant permission to discontinue until after SR reached agreement with Amtrak to continue the service.

NATIONAL LIMITED (NY/Washington-Pittsburgh-Columbus-Dayton-Indianapolis-St. Louis-Kansas City): GAO's study did not take into account cost reductions and service quality improvements realized late in 1978 when this train was converted to new Amfleet equipment. This is the only train Amtrak runs to Indianapolis near the Beech Grove shops, which Amtrak would continue as its major car overhaul facility under the DOT plan. Cars can be cycled in and out as "deadhead" equipment on the "National"; Amtrak would have to pay about $200,000/year to operate a special weekly move between Chicago and Indianapolis, in addition to having cars out of service longer than necessary.

MT. RAINIER (Seattle-Portland) and PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (Seattle-Vancouver): These trains should run as one, producing a much more convenient schedule north of Seattle, and providing more ridership south of Seattle. A further improvement would result if the train was extended south to Eugene, OR, which the state may subsidize in the future. Vancouver is ideal route for testing of the LRC train.

MONTREALER (Washington-NY-Montreal): Heavily patronized in Vermont; not strictly an international service. Used extensively by Canadians traveling to the U. S., which helps our trade balance. An opportunity exists to negotiate a reduction of costs billed by Canadian National. Transport 2000 (Canada), our Canadian counterpart, is protesting this proposal of discontinuance.

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--On-time performance down from 1972 to 1978 (p. 2-8);
--Various locomotive problems involving slower-than-necessary schedules; train cancellations; and excessive fuel consumption (pp. 2-3/4);
--Unreliable heating and air-conditioning which, contrary to implications of the DOT report (p. 2-3), have not been corrected on the vast majority of long-distance trains. Introduction of the new superliners is expected to solve this for the Western routes over the next few years. Conversion programs have been authorized for the Broadway and Lake Shore Limited in the East.;
--Car maintenance problems increasing costs and decreasing the amount of patronage existing schedules can handle (p. 2-6 and 3-9).

Amtrak has been attacking these problems and laying the groundwork for a major ridership increase. This has progressed slowly because of inadequate capital funding--which problem will continue under the DOT plan. Fare increases at rates higher than the Transportation Price Index would in effect force the passenger to pay for failures in public policy, while driving away riders. DOT implies advocacy of a far stiffer peak period surcharge than any other mode encounters, and little capacity to meet peaks, also unique in public transport which is largely geared to handle peaks.

We fear the results of DOT's policy would be to restrict trains to the rich, thereby handing DOT an argument it could use in future years to defend still more cutbacks.

One attempt to project a tripling of intercity passenger miles by the year 2000 while holding energy consumption constant relied on regular passenger trains for 350 billion passenger-miles/year. DOT would cut Amtrak from 4.6 billion to 3.7 billion. This is a move in the wrong direction.

"If we were to have an oil embargo now like the one we had in 1973, the United States would be on its knees in 120 days," according to Frederick Johnson, of the Dept of Energy's strategic planning office (quoted in Traffic World, Jan. 29, editorial).

Developing the rail system would also enable more freight to be handled on the rails, improving safety and reducing costs on the highway system.

ROUTE-BY-ROUTE DISCUSSION

SAN JOAQUIN (Oakland-Bakersfield): Caltrans would like to subsidize the extension of this run into Los Angeles which would drastically increase ridership, but Southern Pacific is obstructing new services.

NORTH COAST HIAWATHA (Chicago-Bismarck-Billings-Seattle): This route has constantly been hampered by unreliable performance and frequent schedule changes. If continued, it would likely be helped by rerouting through Helena, the capital of Montana.

LONE STAR (Chicago-Oklahoma-Dallas/Houston): NARP has long called for realigning Texas north-south services so they would run straight south from Dallas, the biggest market, rather than Ft. Worth. The full train should run Ft. Worth-Dallas-Waco-Houston and its performance would be improved by (a.) picking up Waco, and providing direct Dallas-Houston service; (b.) eliminating the costs of switching in Ft. Worth and running a separate Ft. Worth-Dallas section; (c.) providing a shorter route between Temple and Houston (using MKT Sealy-Houston).

INTER-AMERICAN (Chicago-St. Louis-Little Rock-Dallas-Ft. Worth-Austin-San Antonio-Laredo): As with the Lone Star, this train should head directly south from Dallas to improve running times between key cities. It has enjoyed dramatic ridership increases recently (November up 36.4%). Station problems in San Antonio.

FLORIDIAN (Chicago-Louisville-Nashville-Jacksonville-Miami/St. Petersburg): NARP and others have fought a long hard campaign to get this train re-routed through Atlanta and Indianapolis. It also has heavy ridership within Florida, especially between Waldo (for the university at Gainesville) and Miami.

NEW YORK-FLORIDA: The DOT report recommends cutting back from three daily trains to one, plus continuing the daylight NY-Savannah "Palmetto". This is Amtrak's most successful long-distance route and would suffer a dramatic decrease in capacity, as well as the following specific service eliminations: Charleston-Fayetteville (eastern) route in Carolinas would lose service to points south of Savannah; all service would be discontinued to the Waldo (western) line in northern Florida serving U. of Fla.; assuming Amtrak uses the heaviest travel pattern (Champion/Meteor schedules), cities served at convenient hours now by the Silver Star only would lose convenient service (Raleigh area; Richmond northbound; Jacksonville southbound). We find it hard to believe DOT's claim 81% of existing passengers would be served, unless one assumes people don't care what time of day they ride, and many extra sections would be operated. DOT implies, however, that very high peak fares would discourage peak ridership.

SOUTHERN CRESCENT: Secretary Adams says this train suffers from low ridership, yet SR's statistics presented to the ICC showed 1976 and 1977 ridership figures both up from year-before, and this train has uniquely been excluded from Amtrak's promotional campaigns. SR has not advertised the route since 1976, but Amtrak has just started a promotional effort timed with its Feb. 1 takeover of the train: advertising; new fares; consolidating stations with other Amtrak trains in Birmingham and Charlottesville; and eliminating SR's restrictions on riding between certain points. ICC did not grant permission to discontinue until after SR reached agreement with Amtrak to continue the service.

NATIONAL LIMITED (NY/Washington-Pittsburgh-Columbus-Dayton-Indianapolis-St. Louis-Kansas City): GAO's study did not take into account cost reductions and service quality improvements realized late in 1978 when this train was converted to new Amfleet equipment. This is the only train Amtrak runs to Indianapolis near the Beech Grove shops, which Amtrak would continue as its major car overhaul facility under the DOT plan. Cars can be cycled in and out as "deadhead" equipment on the "National"; Amtrak would have to pay about $200,000/year to operate a special weekly move between Chicago and Indianapolis, in addition to having cars out of service longer than necessary.

MT. RAINIER (Seattle-Portland) and PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (Seattle-Vancouver): These trains should run as one, producing a much more convenient schedule north of Seattle, and providing more ridership south of Seattle. A further improvement would result if the train was extended south to Eugene, OR, which the state may subsidize in the future. Vancouver is ideal route for testing of the LRC train.

MONTREALER (Washington-NY-Montreal): Heavily patronized in Vermont; not strictly an international service. Used extensively by Canadians traveling to the U. S., which helps our trade balance. An opportunity exists to negotiate a reduction of costs billed by Canadian National. Transport 2000 (Canada), our Canadian counterpart, is protesting this proposal of discontinuance.

AMTRAK ANSWERS THE DOT

(The following is the excerpted text of a statement released by Amtrak on January 31, following release of the DOT report:)

"What is it worth to America to acquire and maintain benefits which are generated by a rail passenger transportation system?" That's the primary question Amtrak believes has to be answered following the release today of the DOT plan to restructure the Amtrak system.

In an "Amtrak Perspective" on the DOT Report, the corporation said that "the question of what specific routes are to be operated will always be subjective regardless of the efforts made to describe and define economic and social criteria" and after 7 1/2 years of experience "there is no statistical method whereby an optimal rail network can be established."

Amtrak concluded, therefore, "the issues are not resolved initially by a map," but by "deciding the key policy issues relating to the benefits and costs of a rail passenger system in context with the nation's total transportation needs."

On the benefits side, the Amtrak Board of Directors believes there are clear and substantial arguments for a rail passenger system. They are:

*Availability of an intercity mass transit mode for those who cannot or choose not to travel by other means.

*Environmental aspects of land use, air and noise pollution.

*Potential energy savings through efficiency, especially since railroad energy consumption is, or can be, derived from energy sources other than imported oil.

*Availability of the safest mode of travel.

*Provision of city-center service which in turn promotes economic development including intermodal facilities.

Amtrak acknowledged that while these benefits can be identified, some are difficult to quantify. And they must be purchased at a cost.

"Experience shows that rail passenger services in the U.S. and in all major countries of the world are not capable of operating solely on the income from commercial revenues," said Amtrak's statement. "Social benefits are an integral but not easily quantifiable element." The corporation, which said it will be "fully responsive to the requests of Congress for information and assistance as it develops its views on the future of Amtrak," released a list of concerns regarding DOT's recommendations:

LEVEL OF SERVICE: Amtrak said its problems are largely due to the fact that limited service is being maintained over too large a system without adequate resources. "The Amtrak Board believes that the route restructuring process is essential. However, if it leads to still inadequate service operated over a smaller system, then the public will not be well served," said the statement.

FUTURE USE: Amtrak trains operate by virtue of contracts between Amtrak and private railroads that own most lines, and changes in train routings could affect future operations. "To the extent the current route system is reduced, the contractual obligations of the railroads no longer providing passenger service will be lost. The net effect of this is clear: those railroads will no longer be required to maintain their physical plant at the elevated level of condition necessary to operate a rail passenger system," said Amtrak. It suggested that in any route reduction, funding to maintain currently used facilities in a standby state of readiness should be considered.

WAITING FOR THE ZERO-BASE ZEPHYR? The American public has amply demonstrated that it wants passenger trains. But many large cities will be completely without rail service if the DOT plan is allowed to take effect as proposed. Displaced passengers will turn to highways with consequent petroleum consumption increase. Message Media photo.

MANAGEMENT FLEXIBILITY: Amtrak said it is a management function to determine train frequencies, routings, on-board services, equipment usage, schedules and fares according to its legislative mandate. In the DOT report, however, the system recommended in conjunction with the funding provided effectively eliminates that flexibility. "For example, the Amtrak Board has adopted a policy that daily train service is the minimum service that should be offered the traveling public. The report recommends tri-weekly service over some routes," said Amtrak.

TRANSITION TO RECOMMENDED ROUTES: Should DOT's report be accepted by Congress, Amtrak is expected to change routes Oct 1. But, Amtrak said, "The report overlooks the real possibility that not all railroads will be in position to permit operation of proposed routes on the schedules assumed or at the cost levels contained in the funding. The need for track connections and other modifications requires unavoidable lead time in many instances."

COMMUTER SERVICES: It is strongly believed by Amtrak that full reimbursement for total costs must be provided for it to enter into commuter rail contracts.

NATIONAL EMERGENCIES: The DOT report was not required to consider the extent to which, if at all, railroad passenger service is required in a national emergency.

CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP PROPOSED: Amtrak said it is prepared to propose a refined set of standards or criteria against which its operation should be measured and thru which future route alignments could be considered. This coincides with the Amtrak Board's belief, as announced in December, that the most effective method of handling public financing of Amtrak is thru establishment of a "contractual relationship" with Congress. Amtrak supported DOT's recommendation for long-term authorization as an essential element of this relationship.

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THE METROCLUB CARS being rebuilt as part of the current Metroliner overhaul will have 2-and-1 seating like Amclub cars. This will mean that the only swivel parlor car seats left on Amtrak trains will be in the old PRR parlor cars used as adaptor cars between the PATRIOT's Amfleet and the CRESCENT's conventional cars between New York and Washington..... PRESIDENT ALAN BOYD of Amtrak wrote an RTN reader this month: "We are making a 'salutary beginning' this month as we start a new phase of Amtrak's development with the operation of the SOUTHERN CRESCENT. All of this is clouded somewhat by the U.S. DOT restructuring plan which impacts on this area, but we must hope for the best. In any event, we are incorporating this train into our national network proudly and hope the long tradition of that excellent train will continue." We plan to have complete coverage of the changeover of the SOUTHERN CRESCENT operations in our next issue.....

* * *

PROFESSOR RONALD SHECK, who wrote an "Amtrak 80" proposal some time ago for a rationally-balanced Amtrak system, has drawn up an "Amtrak 88" proposal. We hope to have more on this in the near future in RTN..... TRAILWAYS BUS PRESIDENT J. Kevin Murphy told the National Press Club late in January that he favors establishment of multi-modal transportation centers, with bus, train, commuter and mass transit operations coordinated..... CONSUMERS RATE TRANSPORTATION very low. "Money" magazine took a subscriber poll (Dec issue) and found that readers rated dentists and barbers at the top in consumer satisfaction, while the bottom six services were: taxis, city transit, intercity buses, Postal Service, auto repairs, and at the bottom--railroads..... SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE will begin hearings on the Amtrak cutback plan on Mar 5..... FALL AMTRAK RIDERSHIP was up from 1977 (see data on page 23); Oct was up 2.5%, Nov up 7.6%. These figures came as a relief after a summer that had poor showings.....

THE JANUARY ISSUE of Railroad Magazine was the last issue of that venerable publication. Editor Freeman Hubbard has retired, and Railfan Magazine will take over Railroad, to become Railfan & Railroad, effective with the May issue. It will be published bi-monthly, and will include some of the columns and features of Railroad magazine. Railroad began in 1906 as Railroad Man's magazine, the first of a number of popular railroad publications. In its early days of publication, RTN praised Freeman Hubbard for his reject-the-automobile stand; Hubbard said he never owned a car, got all over by public transportation, and saved a lot of money in the process..... A QUICK ABANDONMENT of the Florida East Coast Railway's 11 miles of track in Dade County was urged by the DOT in a Jan 19 announcement--so the line can be used as part of Dade County's new rapid rail transit system.....

WESTBOUND EMPIRE BUILDER was cancelled at Chicago Feb 8 for lack of equipment. Amtrak has been turning the train occasionally at Minneapolis eastbound, substituting Amfleet equipment for the Minneapolis-Chicago leg as 30-below-zero temperatures continued in Montana and North Dakota. On one occasion the eastbound train was turned at Fargo, Amfleet equipment running to Fargo from Chicago to meet the delayed domeliner. BN is requiring four steam generator cars on BUILDER and NORTH COAST runs across Montana, with the 3rd and 4th steam units scheduled to operate Minneapolis-Spokane. It's been so cold that even heater cars have been freezing up on the northern runs; and train delays--if they are not cancelled altogether--are running up to 24 hours..... EARLY FEBRUARY RUMOR says the COAST STARLIGHT will return to its old speeds May 29--about an hour cut each way Seattle-L.A..... News in this issue is updated thru Feb 15, 1979.

RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR HEARINGS (continued from page 4)

torium, 19 S. Main. Mar 1: Grand Junction: City Hall Bldg, Rood Avenue entrance, 250 N. 5th St. Mar 2, Denver: 269 U.S. Post Office Bldg, 1823 Stout St. All hearings are scheduled to begin at 9:30am. Readers interested in the fate of this scenic train are advised also to contact Kirk Whitely, owner, Hotel Colorado, Glenwood Springs CO 81601.

RAIL FANTRIPS

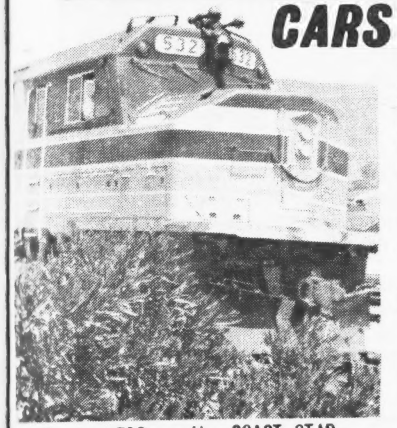
Apr 21: "Constitution Flyer" triangle trip Boston-Springfield-North Haven Shore Line Jct (freight only) Mystic-Boston w. side trip to Valley RR or Mystic Seap't. Fare before 4/2: $29.95. Mass Bay RRE, Box 136N, Ward Hill MA 01830. Kids $10.

Mar 10 & 11: "Warrenton Winter Ltd" Alexandria VA-Manassas-Warrenton RT ea. day. Steam loco 722. Lv Alexandria 9am. $17.50; kids $15. Sponsors: NRHS & RRE. Warrenton Winter Limited c/o K. Gillespie, agent, 19023 Canadian Ct, Gaithersburg MD 20760. / Aug 18-Sep 3: Hudson Bay Holiday; fly L.A. or S.F. to Vancouver, E&N Rwy, Inside Passage cruise, rail to Churchill, return. $1150 up. Info: Great Western Tours, 639 Market St, Suite 900, San Francisco CA 94105. 415-398-2994.

Mar 17-18: "Snowflake Special" RT Oakland CA-Reno NV, open platform car Autoliner 100 on S.F. ZEPHYR $98.50. Bay Area Elec. RR Ass'n c/o Neil Lang, 555 Jean St., Apt. 532, Oakland CA 94610. 415-653-9691.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to: Rail Travel News, Fantrips Dept., PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

CARS & CONSISTS



Engine 532 on the COAST STARLIGHT at San Luis Obispo. RTN

*BLACK HAWK, train 371, Chicago Jan 26: engines 280, 288 (F40PHRs); cars 1260, 21201, 21156, Amdinette 20225, 21117, 21241, Amcafe 20027, 21184 (Sundown Ski Special to Dubuque; over 400 aboard; 5 hours late).

*CARDINAL, train 50, Chicago Jan 26: engine 266 (F40PHR); cars 1232, 1211, 2940 "Pacific View", Amdinette 20218, 21226.

*NATIONAL LIMITED, train 30, Kansas City Jan 29: engines 402 (E), 256 (F40PHR); cars 1237, 2989 "Pine Fern", Amdinette 20235, 21886, 21864, 21837, buffer car 10602, (deadheads to Beech Grove Shops:) 4560, 1415, 8008, 1114, 2254 "Star Scene", 4526, 8024.

*EMPIRE BUILDER, train 7, Seattle Feb 1: engines 234, 248 (F40PHRs), heater cars 671, 664; cars 2260 "Placid Bay", 2266 "Placid Sea", 8153 "Whitefish Lake", 8105, dome 9465, 5690, dome 9480, 4510, 2267 "Placid Vale" (as dorm), SP 6727, SP 6733. Ar Seattle 8hrs, 11 minutes late.

*sleeper 2676 "Silver Ravine" is being repaired in Seattle. Damage included puncture of the "right-hand" side of the blind end, adjacent to a roomette.

A REPORT ON RTN BOOK PUBLICATIONS

We expect to have our small book, "Issues in American Rail Travel," ready for mailing just shortly after this issue of RTN reaches subscribers. Please accept our apologies for the delay in production of this book. For those who have not ordered a copy yet, the book sells for $3.95 (incl. relevant tax) plus 55¢ postage & handling, a total of $4.50.

Following the appearance of the Issues book, our long-awaited First Rail Travel Yearbook will be produced next. All those who have previously ordered it will receive it in rotation, and we will keep the price of $3.50 per copy postpaid open for additional orders up to the time of publication date announcement (add tax in California). After that time, the price will be substantially higher because of inflation since the original announcements.

Address orders to:
MESSAGE MEDIA, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you!

EXPRESS ADS

TRAINS!!! We know them!!! We ride them!!! We sell train tickets!!! Call us for tickets and reservations for your next trip!!! GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994. P.S. We sell air tickets, too. Shh!!!

TIMETABLES - Public & Employee New list monthly. SSAE for latest list. Compendium of AMTRAK timetables, 50¢. CARL LOUCKS, 199 Wayland, Hamden CT 06518.

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports from 30 railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. Will buy items.

TROLLEY NOSTALGIA: "Trolley Trails Through the West": Vol. 1 - Yakima, Vol. 2 - Seattle, Vol. 3 - Portland, Vol. 4 - Tacoma, Spokane, Bellingham, etc., Vol. 5 - Montana and Utah $3.00 each. Moneyback guarantee. Wilson Bros. Publications, Box 712RTN, Yakima WA 98907.

EX-AMTRAK RESERVATIONS CLERK tells you how you can obtain sleeping accommodations 99% of the time when traveling via USA Railpass. Never wait until one hour before departure again! Copyrighted narrative, "The Sting," tells all from an insider's point of view! $3.95. Order now for immediate shipment: PGN, Inc., Dept. P-74, 323 Franklin Bldg., Suite 804, Chicago IL 60606.

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Ann Arbor, Bessemer Route, Canadian Pacific, Delaware and Hudson, Erie, Frisco, Grand Central Terminal, Illinois Central, Lehigh Valley, Maine Central, New York Central, Pere Marquette, Richmond and Danville, Southern, Union Pacific and Washington Baltimore and Annapolis button blazer sets, 2 large 4 small, $2.95 postpd. JOSEPH LAJOIE, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

RTN READERS FROM IDAHO: Please send me info on a ranch (around Boise?) where I and possibly 1 other person could stay long enough for a good look around the high country. Will answer questions about my credentials & would like answers to questions about life in Idaho. I'm 23, single, & may be pursuing a search. THANX. Merlin L. Marlowe, RR 2, Fairfax MN 55332.

TIMETABLES-Lists SSE & 25¢. Clifford, A-121 Princeton Inn, Princeton, NJ 08540.

THREE 1979 RAILFAN FUN-TRIPS--May 10-25 MEXICO including Copper Canyon, Mexico City, street cars, subway, and private cars MISTLETOE & SOONERLAND--July 19-29 MISSISSIPPI QUEEN river cruise St. Louis to Cincinnati including Transport Museum & AMTRAK Beech Grove shop--Sept 25 to Oct 7 NEW ENGLAND foliage trip including Edaville Railroad, Mt. Washington Cog, Steamtown, & Seashore Trolley Museum. Basic travel by trains--join anywhere using AMTRAK connections. For complete brochures and rates, call or write MIDWEST TRAVEL SERVICE, Howard B. Thornton, Director, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City, Oklahoma, 73110--405-732-0566.

YOU'RE INVITED!!--NARP REGION IX CONVENTION--OKLAHOMA CITY--MAR 23-25--Excellent program including "ROCK" & TULSA FAN TRIPS--Banquet, hotel with rail-view rooms-come by AMTRAK--low rates--for details, call or write Howard B. Thornton, Arrangements Chairman, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City OK 73110. 405-732-0566.

RAILROADIANA AUCTION Sat. May 5 sponsored by Pottstown NRHS at Old Lukes Church, behind the Post Office Gilbertsville PA. 400 lots of collectibles Lanterns, Builder Plates, Timetables, and much more. For info write Ted Maurer 1931 N. Charlotte St., Pottstown PA 19464. Inspection at 9am, sale at 11am.

LATEST AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR	OCTOBER 1978	NOVEMBER 1978
Metroliners	150,825	159,890
Northeast Corridor Conventional	405,639	450,465
New Haven-Springfield	24,548	27,357
New York-Philadelphia	197,395	200,622
Philadelphia-Harrisburg	78,804	82,842
New York-Harrisburg	17,767	17,137
Total Northeast Corridor	874,978	938,313
SHORT DISTANCE		
New York-Buffalo/Detroit	46,052	55,480
Chicago-St. Louis	14,218	17,793
Chicago-Milwaukee	22,954	24,870
Chicago-Detroit	33,420	38,866
Chicago-Carbondale	13,353	14,669
Chicago-Quincy	7,776	8,495
Los Angeles-San Diego	55,988	59,608
Seattle-Portland	8,354	8,754
Seattle-Vancouver	4,695	6,376
Washington-Cincinnati	5,008	4,744
Washington-Martinsburg	24,489	20,990
Oakland-Bakersfield	4,296	6,002
New York-Montreal	8,774	8,135
Chicago-Port Huron	6,692	8,616
Chicago-Dubuque	4,021	5,169
St. Paul-Duluth	5,995	2,961
Total Short Distance	266,085	291,528
LONG DISTANCE		
Washington-Montreal	27,133	28,469
New York-Florida	43,678	58,692
Chicago-New York/Washington	14,185	17,417
Chicago-Cincinnati-Washington	7,757	9,330
Kansas City-New York/Washington	13,438	15,430
Chicago-Seattle (N)	13,871	16,053
Chicago-Seattle (S)	13,908	16,073
Chicago-San Francisco	18,443	20,795
Chicago-Los Angeles	19,088	21,772
Chicago-Houston	17,065	20,817
Chicago-New Orleans	14,792	17,570
Chicago-Florida	8,370	10,471
Chicago-Laredo	8,571	11,013
Los Angeles-New Orleans	6,089	6,717
Los Angeles-Seattle	31,197	38,898
Chicago-New York/Boston	21,636	24,933
Boston-Newport News	42,869	58,577
New York-Savannah	29,616	31,998
Seattle-Salt Lake City	10,466	14,231
Boston-Tri-State	3,029	4,321
Total Long Distance	365,201	443,577
SPECIAL TRAINS	7,884	2,066
SYSTEM TOTAL	1,514,148	1,675,484